

Today's Worship Leaders  
Rev. Matt Weiler, Rev. Julie Kline.  
Deb Search Willoughby, Lay Liturgist  
Jacqueline Stilger, Director of Music  
Bernie Foulk, Organist

March 5, 2025  
7:00 pm



# Ash Wednesday

## MISSION

We are called to:

- Experience God's Love
- Celebrate God's Love
- Share God's Love

## VISION

We are a Christ-centered community where our stories are woven with God's story.

## CORE VALUES



**Love:** God is Love and all creation is made in love, by love, for love.



**Community:** Sacred relationship with God and one another.



**Inclusion:** All identities belong and are loved in Christ.



**Justice:** Restoration of equity and wholeness.

We are a Reconciling Congregation, welcoming all. First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo invites all persons to join us on our journey of faith.

Jesus Christ calls us to be an inclusive church that exemplifies the kingdom of God. We strive to move toward reconciling relationships with all, affirming those who are marginalized for any reason, including sexual orientation or gender identity.

## Gathering

**Prelude** *Trivium III*

Arvo Pärt

## Greeting

Rev. Matt Weiler

One: The grace of the Beloved, Jesus Christ, be with you

All: **And also with you.**

One: Bless the Holy One who forgives all our sins,

All: **God's mercy endures forever.**

## Opening Prayer

O God, maker of everything and judge of all that you have made, from the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up.

By the redemptive power of the cross, create in us clean hearts  
And put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins  
And lead lives worthy of your calling;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**\*Hymn #2138** *Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes* (FWS)

**Old Testament Lesson** Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Deb Search Willoughby

**Lighting the Peace Candle**

**Response #2013** *Bless the Lord* (FWS-black hymnal)

**\*Gospel Lesson** Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Deb Search Willoughby  
*Please rise in body or in spirit as we read the gospel*

**Homily** Rev. Matt Weiler

**Thanksgiving Over the Ashes** Rev. Julie Kline

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.  
Grant that these ashes may be to us  
a sign of our mortality and penitence,  
So that we may remember that only by your gracious gift  
are we given everlasting life;  
Through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

**\*Imposition of the Ashes** (in silence)

*All are invited to come forward to receive ashes. The pastors will smudge ashes on your forehead in the shape of a cross as a sign of repentance.*

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Repent, and believe the gospel.

**Confession and Pardon** Psalm 51:1-4, 10-17 (reading responsively)

**Kyrie Eleison** (Lord, Have Mercy) **#482** (UMH-red hymnal)

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.

**Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.**

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

**Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.**

Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

**O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.**

For you have no delight in sacrifice;

if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

**The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;**

**a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

May the almighty and merciful God who desires not the death of a sinner but that we turn from wickedness and live, accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life. Amen.

**\*The Peace of Christ**

**The Lord's Prayer**

Our God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen.

**\*Hymn #269** *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* (UMH)

**Benediction**

*Please depart in silence following the benediction*